

KEATING for their work. As we have seen around the world, COVID-19 has made an already dire situation worse in this region.

As humanitarian needs are rising, forced displacement has increased and local communities are becoming more vulnerable.

In June, the U.N. Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations testified to the U.N. Security Council that terrorist groups are trying to capitalize on the pandemic to undermine and destabilize governments in the Sahel.

This cannot wait. I urge the administration to work with international partners to increase our engagement in the region. It is imperative we address the underlying drivers of extremism in order to truly combat rising terrorist activities.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, effective counterterrorism strategies across North Africa and the Sahel are critical to U.S. security. Terrorist attacks orchestrated by ISIS and al-Qaida-affiliated groups require a coordinated multilateral response, led by the United States in close partnership with nations in the region. A more responsive and resilient counterterrorism strategy in North Africa and the Sahel is critical and crucial to addressing the threats that we face today, and this bill ensures that this program is the most effective it can be in addressing such threats.

I thank Representative MCCAUL and Representative KEATING for bringing this bill forward, I urge the Senate to get it done also, and I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 567, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. DAVIDSON. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

REPEAL OF AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF MILITARY FORCE AGAINST IRAQ RESOLUTION

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3261) to repeal the Authorization for the Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3261

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. REPEAL OF AUTHORIZATION FOR USE OF MILITARY FORCE AGAINST IRAQ RESOLUTION.

The Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution (Public Law 102-1; 50 U.S.C. 1541 note) is hereby repealed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3261.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3261, to repeal the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution, authored by Representative SPANBERGER.

Less than two weeks ago, this body voted for a bill to repeal the 2002 AUMF, nearly two decades after it was originally passed. By not repealing an AUMF and allowing it to remain long after it has served its purpose, we open the door for future administrations of either party to abuse that authority and stretch the authorization far beyond its original purpose.

□ 1530

By failing to remove outdated authorities, Congress cedes its Article I authority to the executive branch. This is contrary to the design of our Constitution, Mr. Speaker, which gives Congress the power to make decisions on matters of war and peace.

Today, we debate a bill that would repeal an Authorization for Use of Military Force older than the 2002 AUMF. H.R. 3261 repeals the 1991 AUMF that authorized the use of the United States Armed Forces pursuant to the United Nations Security Council resolution, which was issued in the wake of Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. Yet, the 1991 AUMF remains in statute, in the United States Code, even though our military liberated Kuwait and completed its limited mission there three decades ago.

By voting this legislation out of the House, we continue to demonstrate our commitment to reclaiming our authority over war powers. One of the hardest decisions any of us can make as Members of Congress is whether to send the brave men and women of our armed services into conflict. While it is a difficult decision, it does not relinquish us of that responsibility.

I thank the gentlewoman from Virginia (Ms. SPANBERGER) for authoring this important legislation.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, let me first say I support this bill to repeal the 1991 Authorization for Use of Military Force for the first Gulf war. That law provided authority to use our military to enforce specific United Nations resolutions opposing Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

With the success of Operation Desert Storm, the Iraqi troops were expelled from Kuwait, and combat operations concluded in early 1991, more than 30 years ago.

The specific point of this law was accomplished. Therefore, there is no reason to leave it on the books.

It is, in that sense, very different from the 2002 Iraq AUMF we voted on before. That authority has been used consistently since its enactment to address terrorist threats in and emanating from Iraq and was most recently used—not that authority—but we saw a strike from the President against Shia militia proxies in Iraq and Syria. Those threats continue to this day. Unfortunately, not all can be targeted using the 2001 AUMF.

Real war powers reform means consulting with our military commanders and intelligence experts. It means updating Article I authorities so the President can use them to address the deadly terrorists who threaten Americans today.

It does not mean repealing old AUMFs without replacing them, although for this one, we don't need to. It does not mean telling the President just to rely on Article II powers when there is no consensus about their reach.

This law, which is tied to U.N. resolutions about the 1990 invasion of Kuwait, legally cannot be used to launch new military engagements in the 21st century.

I support this repeal. I thank Ms. SPANBERGER for bringing this. This is an example of how we can work together to clean up these old AUMFs and hopefully move forward with an updated AUMF.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Ms. SPANBERGER), a valued member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Ms. SPANBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of repealing the 1991 Authorization for Use of Military Force.

Today, we have another opportunity to demonstrate that Congress is serious about reclaiming congressional war powers and serious about representing the servicemembers and veterans who have served our country. Too often, they have served under authorities that were signed into law decades previously.

While the Constitution is clear that only Congress can declare war, we have steadily surrendered this responsibility to the executive branch. Building off the House's vote earlier this month to repeal the 2002 AUMF, we are considering today two additional bipartisan bills that repeal other outdated and inactive AUMFs.

First, we are considering my legislation to repeal the 1991 AUMF against Iraq. This AUMF was Congress' authorization for the first Gulf war of 1991 in response to Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait 30 years ago. The short military conflict that took place under this authority has been over for three decades, and we must remove this old, inactive authority from the books. Repealing this AUMF would help ensure that it is not misused or stretched by any American President going forward.

I thank the broad range of Members and advocates who have supported this legislation and helped bring us to where we are today. Representatives GALLAGHER, GOLDEN, and MELJER have been critical partners in this effort to repeal inactive, outdated AUMFs. We come from different political persuasions and different areas of the country, but we share backgrounds in national security, a commitment to serving our constituents, and a focus on our constitutional responsibilities.

House Foreign Affairs Committee Chair MEEKS and Ranking Member MCCAUL are also original cosponsors of our bill to repeal the 1991 AUMF. They have been instrumental in moving this legislation forward quickly, including a unanimous vote out of the House Foreign Affairs Committee earlier this year.

I applaud Chairman MEEKS for his leadership of the committee and for sending a clear message that Congress must assert its war powers. Even as a Democratic chairman with a Democrat in the White House, Chairman MEEKS is making clear that this is not about a particular President. It is about fulfilling our obligation as Members of Congress.

Intelligence Committee Chair SCHIFF, Armed Services Committee Chair SMITH, State and Foreign Operations Chair LEE, Rules Chair MCGOVERN, and Rules Ranking Member COLE are also original cosponsors of this bill. And I truly appreciate the many other cosponsors who have been on board with this legislation, many of whom have served our Nation in national security roles prior to coming to Congress.

I also want to thank Congresswoman BARBARA LEE for her leadership on AUMF issues and congratulate her on the House voting with strong bipartisan support to repeal the 2002 AUMF earlier this month.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Ms. SPANBERGER. Notably, my bill to repeal the 1991 AUMF is also sup-

ported by a broad range of foreign policy and veterans-focused organizations.

The American Legion, the United States' largest veterans service organization, has emphasized the importance of Congress reasserting its constitutional authority over war powers. In addition, I thank the many other organizations that have been supportive of this effort for their endorsement of our legislation.

For years, Americans have been calling on their Representatives in Congress to exercise our responsibility to make decisions on war and peace. We cannot simply allow AUMFs to accumulate without congressional action.

We have more work ahead of us as we reassert congressional war powers and reform, repeal, and, in some cases, update AUMFs. But, today, we can take an important step by passing my widely supported legislation to repeal a 30-year Authorization for Use of Military Force.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in voting "yes" on the repeal of the 1991 Gulf War Authorization for Use of Military Force.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Let me just say, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Virginia (Ms. SPANBERGER) for bringing this repeal. It is a real step forward. I also want to thank her for her service in the intelligence community over the years, protecting this Nation from the threats that we face. I also want to thank the chairman for really exercising great leadership on this issue.

I don't know the fate of the 2002 AUMF in the Senate, but I can tell you this one, it should sail. It is a very historic moment because it could be the first time in my memory that the Congress has finally reasserted its Article I authority and cleaned up very outdated, old AUMFs.

I see this as a very positive day, working together as Republicans and Democrats on reasserting our congressional authorities, reasserting the fact that, under the Constitution, it is the Congress that has the power to declare war, not the President of the United States.

This committee addresses nothing more grave than issues of war and peace. I think this is, again, a very historic opportunity.

I know, yesterday, the President did attack Shia proxies in Iraq and Syria. I hope I can work with the chairman on updating the 2002 and 2001 AUMFs so we can repeal the 2001 and update it to what are the modern threats that we face. After all, they are over 28 years old. Many serving may not have even been born at the time those were passed by Congress.

It is refreshing to see this kind of leadership from the chairman coming out of this committee. I applaud him, commend him. I commend the gentlewoman from Virginia for bringing this measure forward. I look forward to it

being passed by the Senate and cleaning up, as we say, the housekeeping on the books. I also look forward to exercising our authorities moving forward.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume for the purpose of closing.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. MCCAUL for working together in regard to this 1991 AUMF reform that was put forth by Ms. SPANBERGER. I want to tell the gentleman that, of course, we will work together, as I indicated at the last debate that we had on the floor to repeal and replace the 2001 AUMF so that we can deal with those items that make sure that we are secure and are modernizing and updating what we need to do to make sure that we are updated and strong moving forward, utilizing what the Constitution has given us, the Article I authority in war powers. I think that is absolutely key and essential.

It is difficult for all of us who sit here as Members of Congress, but it is our duty and our responsibility that we can't dodge. I think we understand that in a bipartisan way, that we are going to take up the responsibilities that we have.

Passing the repeal of the 2002 AUMF was the beginning of our work of reclaiming our authority over matters of war and peace, and today's repeal of the 1991 AUMF continues that effort.

Again, Representative SPANBERGER's bill before this Chamber today will remove an outdated AUMF and lessen the risk that the executive can circumvent Congress in utilizing military force.

I thank Representative SPANBERGER for authoring this bill, as well as the support of so many here in Congress on both sides of the aisle for defending Congress' Article I authority. We are doing this collectively, our responsibility that we are not dodging and not giving to the executive branch.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, nearly two decades ago, Congress passed a resolution authorizing military force against the Iraqi regime of Saddam Hussein. That resolution—aided in its passage by deeply flawed intelligence that we now know had no basis in fact authorized the use of force for two express purposes: to defend the national security of the United States against the continued threat posed by Iraq and to enforce all relevant UN Security Council resolutions regarding Iraq. It has been 18 years since Saddam Hussein was deposed. It has been a decade since the United States declared a formal end of operations in Iraq. The Iraqi government is a regional partner and the UN Security Council resolutions referenced have been fulfilled.

In short, there is no virtue in allowing the 2002 AUMF to lay dormant but active. The only possible outcome is for a future administration to wield it as a legal loophole to bypass the need to confer with Congress before engaging in military operations. Each of us here

understands that the nature of modern warfare has changed—it is murkier, dirtier, and involves a variety of state- and non-state actors.

But that fact should not compel Congress to forfeit its constitutional responsibility to directly authorize the use of force. It should not preclude any administration from receiving direct authorization from the Congress to engage in global conflicts.

Earlier this year, the House Foreign Affairs Committee had a productive hearing where each of the three expert witnesses testified that this AUMF is not necessary. It does not enhance our national security. It does not make Americans any safer. It does not make the mission of our men and women in uniform any easier. To repeal this resolution would not tie the hands of the current administration or any future administration in their responsibility to preserve the national security of the United States—it would instead ensure that it could not be manipulated to take us into a war that Congress did not authorize.

If we fail to act, we run the risk of opportunistic legal interpretations leading to a slippery slope until our country finds itself on a permanent war footing. Congress did not authorize that in 2002. We shouldn't tacitly authorize it by failing to act. Let's do our jobs—we owe it to the American people and to our men and women in uniform.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3261.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. DAVIDSON. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion are postponed.

REPEAL OF JOINT RESOLUTION TO PROMOTE PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3283) to repeal the joint resolution entitled, "A joint resolution to promote peace and stability in the Middle East", as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3283

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. REPEAL OF JOINT RESOLUTION TO PROMOTE PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST.

Effective on the date that is 90 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the joint resolution entitled "A joint resolution to promote peace and stability in the Middle East" (Public Law 85-7; 22 U.S.C. 1961 et seq.) is hereby repealed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. McCAUL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 3283, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3283 to repeal the joint resolution entitled "A joint resolution to promote peace and stability in the Middle East," offered by Representative MEIJER.

Earlier, I made the case for continuing this Chamber's hard work of reclaiming congressional war powers, started less than 2 weeks ago by our vote to repeal the 2002 AUMF and continued by our debate today to repeal the 1991 AUMF and the 1957 AUMF.

□ 1545

I will keep my remarks short so as not to belabor the points I made earlier, as the case for repealing the 1941 AUMF similarly applies to the 1957 AUMF, if not more so.

Going way back, I was barely a toddler when this authorization was passed, and I have been here for a while. The fact that this authorization still exists as good law today indicates the vital need for Congress to take seriously its responsibility over war and peace and repeal AUMFs once their purpose has been served or expired.

Good legislative housekeeping requires us not to just authorize force when needed to protect and defend this Nation, but to recall and repeal authorities when their usefulness has passed.

The Soviet Union this authorization was meant to counter no longer exists. There is no Soviet Union now. The 1957 AUMF is a relic of the Cold War. It is outdated and obsolete.

We, as Members of Congress, have been granted the responsibility to make decisions on matters of war and peace by the Constitution, a responsibility none of us takes lightly. However, for far too long we have failed to make those decisions at all. Instead, we have ceded our Article I authority to administrations that have reinterpreted old AUMFs. The threat of that abuse continues so long as we allow these authorizations to remain in the U.S. Code.

I thank again the ranking member for working with us to bring this bill forward. I thank Representative MEIJER for authoring this legislation. And I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First of all, I thank the chairman for, again, exercising our Article I constitutional responsibilities. That is what leadership is all about, and this one is very bipartisan, and again, I think historic. Because in my memory we have never done this before successfully.

I also thank the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MEIJER) for introducing this bill to repeal an aging AUMF that has never been used in the 64 years since it was enacted.

Now, I have to say, Mr. Speaker, I wasn't even born when this AUMF was enacted. Just barely, though. I was born not long after that. But that is amazing as I stand here at almost 60 years old. That law gave the President authority to "use Armed Forces to assist any Middle East nation requesting assistance against armed aggression from any country controlled by international communism."

This unused relic of the Cold War should not be left on the books or on the shelf for a creative President to dust off and put to unexpected use. So I think we all agree, if a President was to commit U.S. troops to new hostilities in the Middle East, he or she should come to the Congress for authorization.

Mr. Speaker, for that reason I support this repeal, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Virginia (Ms. SPANBERGER), a very valued member of our committee on the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Ms. SPANBERGER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of repealing the 1957 AUMF. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ranking Member, I was also not born when this Authorization for Use of Military Force was put in place.

In addition to considering my legislation to repeal the 1991 Gulf war AUMF, I am pleased that we are considering a separate bill that I co-lead with Congressman MEIJER to repeal an open-ended resolution from 1957 that authorized the use for military force in the Middle East.

This Cold War-era authorization still on the books today is more than 60 years old, and it provides outdated, blank-check authorities to an executive branch or Presidential administration that might seek to justify expanded operations in the Middle East. It is not necessary, and we must repeal it.

Repealing this resolution would not undermine any existing U.S. military operations, but it would help ensure that its significantly outdated authorities are not used or abused by any future President. Additionally, it would show that Congress is ready to exercise its responsibilities under the Constitution.

I was pleased to see this bill pass out of the Foreign Affairs Committee on a voice vote, and I appreciate Congressman MEIJER's leadership, as well as the bipartisan cosponsors who have joined him.